even those who are settled in the clan. They have their own medicine and luma for themselves, though they must not do it before the chief of the country.

III. *The luma of bukanye and the great national feast.*

The most characteristic of all these ceremonies connected with the first fruits is the luma of bukanyi. Tobane has given me a circumstantial description of this feast and it deserves to be reproduced in all its details, as being a typical manifestation of Bantu national life.

The *nkanye* (1) is a large tree, one of the finest in the country. Its botanical name is Sclerocarya caffra (Sond); it is generally known amongst the English of Natal as the Kafir plum.

It bears fruit of the size of a greengage, which when ripe is a beautiful golden yellow and has a strong flavour of turpentine and a penetrating odour. It is a dioecian tree, the male bearing bunches of flowers while the female has single flowers. The Natives are quite aware of this; they cut down the male plants but take care to keep a few in each district to fecundate the female. The fruit — the kanye — begins to ripen in the month of January and falls to the ground. The odour is perceptible everywhere, and it is then that the principal men of the country approach the chief and say to him: "The time has come to luma."

In the luma of the bukanye it is easy to discover four consecutive ceremonies:

a) The luma of the gods and of the chief.

The first ripe makanye are gathered and pressed at the capital, and the sour liquor thus obtained is poured out on the tomb of the deceased chiefs in the sacred wood; they are invoked to bless this new year and the feast which is about to be celebrated.

(1) Nkanye, plural minkanye, is the tree in question. Kanye, plural makanye, is the fruit of this tree; bukanye is the drink made from this fruit. In the same way the wild apricot tree is called mphimbi, plural mimphimbi. The fruit himbi, plural mahimbi; the drink made from the fruit, buhimbi.

is favourable to the growth of certain plants. But by the side of the sand *(pfunye)* and the hillocks *(shitshunga)*, here and there, is found a sort of black earth, containing a large proportion of vegetable detritus, in which maize, sweet potatoes, sugar cane, etc. thrive splendidly. *Nyaka* is the name given to this black soil : it is found at the foot of the hills which run from Lourenco Marques in the direction of Morakwen, and extends for a distance of some fourteen to eighteen miles. Several small springs rise at the bottom of this gentle slope, and tend to form a curious marsh, covered with beautiful tropical growths, of which gigantic palms *(mimale)* are the most striking. These are found in forests covering hundreds of acres, with an impenetrable undergrowth of ferns, enormous rushes and evergreen shrubs : magnificent palm groves, where apes, wild boars and large storks find a safe retreat.

Between this marsh of primitive mud and the hills extends the arable tract of nyaka. There the fields are lovely ; maize can be grown all the year round. In other places the nyaka is parched and dry, as in the valley of the Lower Nkomati, from the point where it leaves the Lebombo hills to the elbow of Magule. Here the annual overflow of the river deposits on the low-lying plains a fertilising slime, as is the case in Egypt. It is strange to see, during the winter, tufts of grass which were carried down by the stream, months before, caught in the branches of the trees and suspended some 15 to 20 feet above the ground!

The sand of the coast belt is replaced in the hinterland of Matjolo, in the low level between the Nkomati and the Bila plain, etc. by another kind of soil called *hundjusi*. This is a reddish earth containing much sand, but much finer and more fertile than the sand proper.

On leaving the coast belt we reach the Lebombo and Longwe hills, which are composed of a hard reddish porphyraceous stone. Further West, a broad plain extends from the Lebombo to the Drakensberg Mountains, in some places consisting of a greyish or brownish clay, in other regions very dry and stony. The foot

and plural of Cl. 11. When a noun begins with *shi*, it belongs to Cl. shi-pi, with *li* to Cl. li-ti, with *du* to the Class bu-ma. As a rule nouns will be given in their singular form.

133
134

● [137]

Phot. P. Berthoud.

Mimale palmtrees in the surprises near Lourenço Marques.

of the Drakensberg is very fertile, as water flows abundantly from the mountain gorges. Some rivers, however, on reaching the Low Country, dry up entirely, at least during the winter time.

244 pumpkins, another will go to the field and plant some seeds in
753 it without the old man's knowledge ; then people will venture to
824 plant in their own gardens. Transgression of this taboo is said to be punished by lumbago.

222 There are, besides, many wild plants which the housewives
824 collect and of which they make excellent dishes : the *tjeke*, a
828 kind of Chenopodiacea, which is also used as a medicine to induce forgetfulness ; the *nkakana*, a pretty plant of the Cucurbitaceae family, which climbs up the dried stems of maize after the harvest, and of which they eat the leaves and also the pretty little oval pointed fruit.

137 *Tomatoes* (shimati) are also found growing round the villages,
285 where they propagate themselves, and seem to prosper the better the less they are cared for : the Natives take them to Lourenço Marques for sale in very original baskets made of a single palm leaf, with the follicles artistically twisted. I am unable to say when they were introduced. There is a agreeable kind of small tomato which grows wild in Khosen, about the size of a cherry.

244 Natives also cultivate a kind of *onion* (nyala, yi-tin), smaller than the European varieties, which they very much appreciate in their sauces.

249 *The sugar cane* (moba, mu-mi) is never grown in large plantations, but you find it on the Coast, as well as in Zoutpansberg, cultivated on a small scale, either for eating, or for preparing the strong *shiwayawaya* drink, which I shall describe later on.

245 The *pine-apple* (lalasi, dji-ma) has spread as far as the Bilene country and must be of ancient date ; it differs considerably from the Natal pine-apple, being longer, coarser and not so sweet. In many villages large plantations are to be seen.

249 *Tobacco* (fole, dji-ma) is also wide-spread and seems to have been cultivated for a long time. A curious fact is that its cultivation is the business of the men, and women have nothing to do with it. Amongst the Ba-Ronga it is sown first in a damp spot in the marsh, in a special little garden called *shibibi*, and, when it has grown a little, is planted out (simeka) on the hill, near the villages. When nearly ripe the lower leaves are first

cut, dried and ground "ku djinga," as a foretaste! Then the other leaves are cut, covered with nkuhlu foliage and left for three days to mature (ku pfundja) ; a string is then passed through them and they are hung to a tree to dry. Before they have become brittle, they are rolled up together so as to form the "mfunge," a bunch of tobacco leaves which is sometimes three or four feet long by 4 to 6 inches thick. This bunch is exposed to the sun on the roof for one day. When the process of drying is finished, the leaves are put once more outside in the evening so as to get a little damp, and are then finally rolled up together. The bunch of tobacco is kept inside the house and often used for barter. 249 [436]

The *manioc* (ntjumbulu, mu-mi) is extensively cultivated both in the sand of the hills and near the marshes. The root, dried, and eaten either whole or ground, is very good food, but some plants have a bitter taste. But manioc can hardly be called a vegetable and borders on the domain of trees.

III. *Trees and fruits.*

Fruits play an important part in the diet of the Thongas. but wild fruits alone, the fruit with which Mother Earth presents them. They neither plant nor cultivate the trees ; when clearing the ground, they simply spare the fruit-bearing kinds which grow naturally. It may be that a man will sow some seeds of a particularly good *nkuhlu*, or *nkanye*, in his garden, if that garden happens to be devoid of trees : this is all they do to improve the quality of the fruit. It is no wonder, after all, that tree cultivation is almost entirely absent in Thonga agriculture : villages move so frequently, owing to contamination by death, accusations of witchcraft, or exhaustion of the soil, that nobody takes the trouble to plant trees which he will not be able to carry away with him to his new residence. 137 245

As regards the indigenous fruits, they are varied and numerous. Natives systematically spare every fruit tree when clearing their 222

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

222 fields and, thanks to this wise precaution, the fructiferous growths have increased enormously ; and wherever the land is cultivated it presents the appearance of a huge orchard.

●/37 One of the best of the Native fruits is the *sala* (dji-ma), which
222

The nsala tree bearing the sala fruits. *Phot. A. Burel.*

takes a leading place in the diet of the Ba-Ronga ; it is a large shining, green ball, taking on a yellowish tint when ripening, and consists of a thin shell, easily broken, containing some twenty flat oval stones, covered with a yellowish coloured pulp, very sweet and delicate in flavour, but a little nauseating to the European taste. The sala is very invigorating and is a great and precious resource in times of shortage of crops.

Its first cousin, the *kwakwa* (dji-ma), is of the same shape and size, but, when ripening, becomes quite an orange yellow; it is never eaten uncooked. The pulp surrounding the stones is prepared in a certain way and made into strips (nhasa, yi-tin), which are hung on the trees to dry or over the fire to be smoked; this is what is called *nfuma*. Once the *nfuma* is dried, it can be pounded and made into a flour much valued when the storehouses are empty, and the new season has not yet begun. 222 252

The sala and the kwakwa are two species of the genus Strychnos (Strychnos spinosa and ungasha) which furnishes chemists and poisoners with the well-known drug strychnine. Does the fruit contain any proportion of this substance? I do not know. It has never been known to kill any one, although it may be the cause of many intestinal troubles which naturally result when the Natives, having no more maize or sweet potatoes, live on nothing but this particular fruit. Strange to say, the kwakwa stones are credited with the power of attracting lightning; the old women say that, when making *nfuma*, these large white stones must never be allowed to lie in a heap in the open air: lightning would surely strike the village were any such imprudence committed. It is a taboo. 222 137 821

I have already described the *nkanye* (mu-mi), (Sclerocarya caffra, Kafir plum), which is certainly the most highly valued of all the trees in Thongaland (I. p. 398). The fruit is used primarily and essentially for the brewing of bukanye, by pressing the pulp, but the kernels of the stones of the nkanye are also much appreciated; they are very oleaginous and a modicum of oil may be obtained by merely squeezing them between the fingers! They are called *mongo*, and the saying is that they are food for kings, for the stones are very hard, the kernels very small and it is hard work to obtain even a small quantity! Not that there is any lack of stones! Heaps, which have been thrown away at the time of the famous bukanye brewing, are to be found in the vicinity of all villages, but the cracking is the difficulty. For this a stone must be sought, far and wide, and small hollows must be made in it of a size to fit the circular nkanye stones; these are then inserted in the sockets and cracked by a sharp skilful blow with another stone, 222 252

follows : the nuts are thoroughly dried (womisa), and slightly pounded in a mortar so as to remove the thin peel which covers them ; they are then winnowed, and ground into a kind of flour ; this flour is put into a pot with a little water and cooked ; the fat is then collected in a big shell of Achatina and kept for external use. The residue is called *bubindje*. 252 303

I do not mention all the other fruits, more or less succulent, which serve the Natives for food. One must be terribly famished to enjoy them. I may just specify the *pfilu* (dji-ma), Vangueria infausta, a kind of insipid medlar ; the *tjhopfa* (dji-ma), fruit of the *ntjhopfa* tree, which I could never muster courage enough to taste, and the *bungu* (dji-ma) sometimes dignified with the title of the Kafir orange. This latter is the fruit of one of the varieties of the india-rubber tree, which grows along the shores of Delagoa Bay. (Landolphia Kirkii.) In the Morakwen forest grow the ntjhole shrubs from which the *tintjole* berries are picked during the summer. 137 222

The *muhlu* or water tree bears a berry called *tihlu*, which has an agreeable taste. The *mphimbi* bears the *mahimbi*, a large round fruit similar in form to an apricot with a double stone. Both these fruits are used to prepare a drink, and we shall mention them when treating of Thonga drinks.

* * *

There are a few taboos to mention in connection with trees. It is considered dangerous to cut the trunk of any large tree. Should you wish to make a mortar of a nkanye, first smear some of the bark with certain drugs and also burn them at the foot of the tree before cutting it down. Should you want to cut down a nkwenga or a mahogany-tree, nhlapfuta (Ro.), shene (Dj.), to make a canoe, the master of the forest must first offer a sacrifice to the spirits of his ancestors who have been buried there. If you omit this precaution, you will be unable to find again the tree you have chosen. 782 824

C. AGRICULTURAL CUSTOMS.

1. *The Agricultural Year.*

137 221 At the season which is called *shimumu*, the little heat, that is to say in July, when the warm weather begins, the nkuhlu puts forth new shoots. Though rain is still far off, the mahogany and sala trees become covered with leaves of a wonderfully delicate green. A kind of Composita (the Helychrisum parviflorum, shirimbyati), which is wide-spread on the sandy dunes, blossoms all over the country ; a beautiful lily (Crinum Forbesii) will expand its splendid white and pink flowers : the *winter* (bushika) has passed away : soon the *hlobo* (summer) will come.

412 221 462 When the Ronga woman notices these signs, she picks up her hoe (shikomo) and starts for the hills, or for the marshes. Her husband has already repaired the implement for her, at home. If the handle was worn out, he has cut a branch of nkonono, (Terminalia sericea), which is the wood invariably used for the purpose, and has shaped it so that one end is thicker than the other ; in this thick end a hole is bored, while the iron hoe head is heated in the fire : the head has, at its base, a long iron point which is inserted nearly red-hot into the hole, burning its way in, and thus solidly fixing the two parts together. This method of fixing on the handle is called ku lumela shikomo. The Ronga hoe has a very short handle, sometimes not more than two feet in length. The Transvaal Thongas use handles three to four feet long. The woman has now nothing to do but to work hard, her lord and master having duly accomplished his share of the labour.

241 221 It is the end of August. Two or three months must still elapse before the rainy season sets in. This period of the year is devoted to a two-fold work : the clearing of fresh land and the cultivation of marshes.

The *clearing of fresh land*, ku tlhaba lisindje (Ro.), ku khatsha

245 the cause of the desolation. Planting new trees is consequently
784 a taboo! Nowadays however, this superstition has died out,
824 and one may see a great number of mango, orange, lemon (1), and pho-pho trees in Thonga fields, on the Coast as well as in Zoutpansberg.

[351] Natives do not generally fence their gardens. Stealing is
685 therefore very easy and it is no wonder that they have recourse to
719 magical means to protect themselves. Here are some of them; they are characteristic instances of Bantu magic.

The *rihehlo*. This consists of a kind of mysterious influence exerted on the thief by throwing a magical powder into his footprints or by taking a little of the earth found in these footprints and treating it with the drugs. The inhabitants of the village where the thief lives will be seized by disease; this will induce them to come to the owners of the garden to confess their fault and pay a fine. Then the magician who had furnished the drug will give them a counter-drug and they will be healed! Amongst the Pedis, the magician anoints with his drugs the stem from which a cob has been stolen. Then the thief will feel intolerable suffering in his little finger and come to the village of the people whom he has robbed crying: "I have stolen!" He pays the fine, receives in exchange the counter-drug and the pain ceases! (Spelonken)

The tinhlamalala. This is the name of the central nervules of the leaves of the Hyphaene palm tree. They are like little snakes, very slender, and flexible. To make the resemblance still greater, the owner of a field makes a knot at the extremity of the rod: this represents the head of the snake. Then he looks for the dried skin which has been cast off by a real snake; he reduces this to ashes, makes a powder with these ashes and anoints the rods. He weaves the rods together to form a kind of crown and places it on one of the mealies stems in his garden. When the thief

● /137 (1) The lemon tree is called mbomu (mu-mi). This seems to be a Native word and the tree also may be indigenous in the country. It grows wild on the banks of the Lower Nkomati to such an extent that there is an island in the river, some distance above Morakwen, which is called Ilha dos Limões, Lemon Island. The lemons are of large size and their rind resembles that of the orange.

D. PREPARATION OF FOOD AND DRINK.

Bantus of South Africa being mostly agriculturists are also vegetarians, not however vegetarians on principle, as they eat meat as often as they have the opportunity ; but these opportunities are rare, so that, as a matter of fact, their diet is essentially vegetable. I shall later on describe the two ways in which they procure meat, viz., cattle-breeding and hunting. Having seen what are the products of their fields, we can confidently proceed to the study of their kitchen, as meat seldom makes its appearance in the "pots on the fireplace!" 262

I. *Fire and salt.*

Thongas do not remember a time when they did not possess these two most important elements of the culinary art. 372

As regards *fire* (ndjilo, mu-mi), the Honwanas knew it before the XVth or XVIth century. The traditions reported I. p. 24 show that some clans believe that there was a time when food was not cooked.

There are four trees used to produce fire by friction (tsika) : 137 ●

1) The *bulolo*, a kind of Hibiscus growing in the estuary of the Nkomati, in the region regularly watered by the tide, is the best *ntsiko* or wooden flint. It is a very light and soft wood and is still used near the Coast, though matches are now to be found everywhere. 372

2) The *mpahla* (mu-mi), a bush of the Compositae family, whose wood is very hard and used to make handles for hoes. It grows all over Thongaland, in the plains as well as in mountainous regions.

3) The *nkuva* (mu-mi), the large wild fig-tree, which covers the banks of the Nkomati and the Maputju rivers, and is common in the low lands.

137 4) The *ntjopfa* (mu-mi), the wild custard tree, employed to
372 light the sacred fire of nyokwekulu (I. p. 388). It is taboo to use it for ordinary purposes, or to warm oneself at its embers. Medicine-men alone are allowed to make ntjopfa fire, having drugs to prevent the disease caused by its use.

372 Dealing with fire taboos, I may add that it is taboo to use
784 branches of a tree which has been struck by lightning ; taboo also to keep alight the fire of a deceased person after the conclusion of the great mourning. It must be ritually extinguished (I. p. 135). In case of misfortune also (khombo), if the bones order it, the old fire must be put out and a new fire be lighted on the central fire-place of the first wife by means of the wooden flint. Each woman will go and take an ember from it and start her own fire again. These laws show that in the eyes of the Bantus there is an intimate connection between fire and the life of the village. When death or misfortune contaminates the community, fire is affected also, and it must be destroyed if the village is to resume its normal life.

372 Gungunyana used to levy a tax on fire : he ordered all the
651 fires of his kingdom to be extinguished at a certain time, and sent messengers to relight them by means of embers procured from the royal kraal. Each village had to pay a tax for the new fire. It seems that this kind of royal right was exercised in the old times by the famous Monomotapa king. Nothing of the kind is met with amongst the more modest Thonga chiefs.

372 The manner of producing fire with the wooden flint is as follows. A dry branch of the tree is secured, from half an inch to an inch thick, and cut into two pieces, each of about 18 inches in length ; one half is called the wife (nsati), the other half, the husband (nuna). The first piece, the female, is laid on the ground and a notch is made in it with a knife ; the notch is cut in two movements : first on the upper part of the wood, secondly on the side of it. The male is then somewhat rounded, inserted perpendicularly in the notch, held firmly between the palms of the hands and made to revolve by a rapid motion of the hands from top to bottom. The operator having reached the bottom of

keeps its flavour for two days, after which it loses both strength and taste, and turns into vinegar (ntjubi). 273

Amongst the Ba-Ronga a very similar process is followed. They call *mbila* the flour and yeast on which boiling water has been poured on the seventh day, the name of the operation being *ku bandjekela mbila*. They let it remain in a cask for three days before boiling it, collecting in the meantime all the necessary fuel for the cooking. After the boiling, it is called *phiriho*. Empty wine barrels being everywhere available, beer can be brewed in greater quantities than was formerly the case.

When they took refuge in Bilen, during the war of 1894-96, the Ba-Ronga there learned to boil the beer a second time : the flour is cooked twice with the yeast and this greatly increases the strength of the byala, which is then called *mpheka*. From the innocent madleko, full of husks, which are as much food as drink, up to the very strong mpheka, passing through the different kinds of buputju and byala, all the different percentages of alcohol are met with. The quantity of yeast mixed with the flour and the length of the boiling are the two main elements to be considered, and it is very difficult to say where buputju ends and where byala begins! However the following rule may be adopted to differentiate them : beer is *byala* when yeast has been added more than once, when the boiling has been prolonged, when the liquid has been strained and when the amount of alcohol it contains is sufficient to keep it in good condition for more than one day.

2) *Drinks made with fruits or other tree products.* The *bukanye* is the most famous, being the great drink at the national feast (I. p. 399). But another very strong and much appreciated drink of this category is the *buhimbi*. The tree *mphimbi* (Ro.), *mbimbi* (Dj.), has an impenetrable mass of branches on which grows a very agreeable fruit of an orange colour with a double stone inside, externally very much like an apricot. When ripe in December, it is very juicy and sweet and produces a very alcoholic beverage. The fruit is pressed between the hands (phamasa) ; the liquid thus obtained is mixed with water and boiled. Any scum rising to the surface is removed (wungula) and the drink left to ferment for five days. It is so alcoholic that it will keep 137 273

137 in good condition for a year and is said to be more intoxicating
273 than wine. The mphimbi tree is found all over the Delagoa dunes.

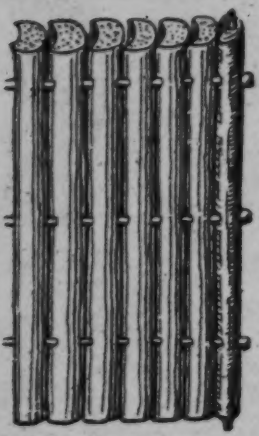
There is an exotic tree, the Anacardium occidentale, called *nkadju* in Ronga which has been introduced and is widely cultivated in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques. It bears

Milala palm trees.

very juicy fruit which the Natives use to prepare a pretty strong alcoholic drink, the *bukadju*. At the season of bukadju there is an enormous amount of drunkenness round the town.

The *milala* or palm tree, from which is made palm wine, *busura*, grows in forests at various places, especially in Nwamba, the North of Nondwane, Maluleke, etc. and in some regions
273 Natives devote considerable time to its brewing. The people of Phesen (Pessene Station on the Komati Poort Railway) are said even to neglect their agricultural duties and to indulge in busura to a great excess. The preparation of palm wine is done according to rule. The forest is divided by the chief amongst

introducing the mud between the reeds and spreading it out with the palms of their hands until it forms a smooth layer all over the interior. Not a ray of light can now enter the hut, except through some small open spaces to be seen, here and there, between the roof and the top of the wall. The air circulates more or less through these small vents, which, however, were not included in the original plan of the hut. The remainder of the clay makes a hard even flooring which will be re-covered from time to time with a fresh coating of black plaster (I. p. 187).



Door of a Ronga hut.

As regards the *door*, the Ba-Ronga in the country round Rikatla generally make it of the wood of the mimale palm (Raphia vinifera, see p. 4). They cut down one or two of the giant leaves of this tree, which grows in the marshes. The leaf itself is one enormous central stalk with narrow folioles on either side ; these are cut off and the nerve remains : a sort of gigantic switch, twenty to thirty feet in length, about four to six inches wide at the base and tapering gradually to its point, convex on one side, and concave on the other. Once dried, it turns a grey colour. The interior is a fibrous pith, of extraordinarily light weight, whilst the exterior bark is very thin, hard and shiny as though it had been varnished with copal. It is impossible to imagine a lighter wood. Comfortably established under the shady trees of the square, our joiner cuts the nerve into several pieces of a given length (say about four feet, the height of the wall). This is not difficult, for it is only necessary to cut through the thin outer bark, when the knife slips through the inner pith, like so much butter! These lengths are then bored through from front to back in three places, say at one, two and three feet from the bottom, and three stout sticks are passed through the holes, firmly holding the several pieces of the nerve together : this makes the door. The ends of the transverse sticks are fixed into a pole which is pointed top and bottom, thus forming pivots or hinges.

II. *Basket-work.*

The milala palm, whose sap supplies the tipplers of Pessene with 137
their famous busura (II. p. 42), is a very valuable tree to the 285
Ba-Ronga, as it is of its leaves that the greater part of the baskets in use by this tribe are made. The basket-maker gathers the most perfect leaves. These are not like the mimale folioles, growing opposite one another on a central nerve. The *milala* (plur. of nala) are true palms, the leaves consisting of folioles from half an inch to an inch in width radiating from a common centre, which itself grows on the end of a long peduncle.

These trees are found in the woods of Mabota, Nondwane, Tembe, on the Coast, and in the low plains of the North Eastern Zoutpansberg, etc., sometimes in large numbers. Returning 285
home, the workman (here we employ the masculine, basket-making being essentially man's work) spreads out the leaves in the sun to dry, having previously straightened the folioles somewhat, separating (hangela) them one from the other ; when they dry, they turn a light grey colour with a shining polished surface, and are then hung up in the hut where they will be sheltered from the dew and ready for use. When the work is to be started, the folioles are torn (phatlula) from their peduncle, and, with a sharp pointed instrument, are split longitudinally into strips or straws of 1/8 or 2/8 of an inch wide, the ribs of the leaves (nhlamalala, yin-tin) being carefully kept ; these delicate wands have their special use.

The Ronga basket makers are very fond of decorating their 285
baskets with *designs in black*. These triangular and square 531
patterns are produced by artistically plaiting dark and light 386
coloured straws, and are not painted on after the baskets are manufactured. The straw is dyed black in the following manner : it is soaked in the black ooze (ntjhaka) of the marshes for two weeks, and then laid out to dry, which gives it a reddish-brownish colour. This hue is deepened by a second treatment. The leaves of a shrub called *mpsabutimu* are gathered and placed in a

than collecting mafureira or wax, or tapping trees for rubber (1). 167

Moreover the fashion of going to the *Transvaal mines*, to earn money, has become so universal that a Thonga would think he had in some sort failed if he had not made a stay in town (shilungu). There, in Johannesburg, they earn £ 3 in the mines, or £ 4—£ 5 monthly as kitchen boys ; so they despise the old primitive trading expeditions which brought less money and were attended with more danger. 439

These new economic conditions not only discourage Natives from trading on their own account, reducing them more and more to the condition of mere hired labourers, but are rapidly destroying their picturesque and interesting industry. For a few shillings they can buy European utensils. Their attractively carved spoons are replaced by ugly tin ones ; their wooden tumblers by less artistic enamelled ones, their primitive plates by European ware decorated in doubtful taste. Instead of the piece of reed which they wore in their ears as a snuff box, they now buy brass cartridges, and the Thonga beauties, discarding the *tihuhlu* fat, now anoint themselves with a scented oil imported from Europe. There may be certain advantages in these changes, but the picturesqueness of Bantu life promptly disappears, together with the incentive to develop their Native arts and crafts! 177 439

E. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON NATIVE INDUSTRY.

It is a strange destiny, that of these African races amongst whom the civilisation of the XIXth century has appeared, effecting the most radical changes in the minds and manners of people who, for centuries, perhaps for tens of centuries, have remained in the same primitive condition, marking time, so to speak, on the same spot, or, at most, 178

(1) There are at least two species of shrubs whose sap, when hardened, produces excellent rubber. These are fairly wide-spread and M. Dewèvre, a Belgian botanist, who has made a special study of rubber plants, and to whom I sent leaves and fruits of the trees, has classified them amongst the Landolphia. One is said to be a Landolphia Petersiana, and the other a variety of the Landolphia Kirki (Dyer) called by others Landolphia Monteiroi. Natives make an incision in the bark of the tree, and a milky sap exudes, which soon thickens and the somewhat sticky filaments are then wound 137 314

178 progressing almost imperceptibly. The transformation would seem to be as rapid as the previous immobility was fixed.

Let us try to discover the causes which may account for this extraordinary stagnation.

176 178 All are agreed in bearing witness to the fact that the state of civilisation in which Europeans found the Bantu tribes of South Africa is of an extremely ancient date. It is true that we have but little historical data to go upon as regards the development of these people, but, nevertheless, it seems to me highly probable that the shape of their ngula, their hwama, their shirundju, their pillows, the construction of their huts, dates from a very remote antiquity, and has been handed down unchanged from generation to generation. How are we to account for this lack of development, whilst the Indo-European races, starting probably from similar primitive conditions, have advanced to so high a degree of civilisation as that of the Greeks and Romans, and ultimately to that of modern times?

The reply given by many casual observers to this question is that *the Bantu races are incapable of progress.* They are condemned, by reason of their mental and spiritual constitution, to vegetate in perpetual barbarism or to make themselves ridiculous by a servile imitation of the superior races. This view is not justified by the facts of the case. We recognise a relative mental inferiority in the Thongas, as in their congeners the Bantus, but their minds, nevertheless, possess in a more or less rudimentary state, all those faculties of which we are wont to boast. During the several years I have passed in close contact with these intellects, supposedly so limited, I have been more often struck with the points of analogy between the Africans and ourselves than by the differences which separate us. Besides, it is an error to assert that they have not progressed. Their inventive genius is fully proved by the various ways in which the several tribes have taken advantage of the materials with which Nature has supplied them. The Ba-Ronga do not make their baskets in the same way as the Zulus, or the Ba-Sutho. Again, in many separate instances, we can note a distinct forward movement in their industry; the arrival of glass beads,

137 314 [illegible] small sticks. A good yield of rubber could undoubtedly be obtained in this country if the trees were cultivated and tapped in an intelligent manner.

(With regard to the name of the rubber tree, compare *Delagoa Bay, its Natives and Natural History*, London, Philip and Son, 1891, written by Mrs Monteiro, an Englishwoman who spent several years in Lourenço Marques and published interesting observations on the country. Without claiming any great scientific accuracy, this volume affords much interesting information.)

your food a little of the earth of the country which you have left ; this will provide the transition between the old and the new domicile (See I. p. 49).

Metals known to the tribe before the coming of the Whites were few. (See page 137). *Nhumbu* or *nsimbi*, iron, *nsuku*, copper, and *ntchopfa*, a name applied to all white metals (tin, silver, etc.) are the only Native names for metals. There is no word for gold.

V. *The Vegetable World. Thonga Botany.*

While Bantus possess a very limited knowledge of Astronomy, Geography, Mineralogy, etc., while their ideas in these domains are in no way deserving of the name of Science, they are much more advanced as regards Plants. Here it is quite allowable to speak of a Science, a rudimentary Science, no doubt, but a true, precise knowledge which has been transmitted from past ages and which denotes a real power of observation.

The Delagoa flora is not very rich. I have succeeded in collecting between four and five hundred different kinds in a herbarium which I sent many years ago for classification to the Herbier Boissier in Geneva. In February 1893, before forwarding the second lot of exsiccata, I gathered together some Natives of Rikatla in the hut which I had pompously styled a Museum and, having promised them 1 s. each if they consented to remain till the end of the examination, I submitted the dried plants to them, asking them their names, their uses, etc. The result of the inquiry was marvellous. My areopagus did not seem to be a very choice one : an old woman, as dry as my exsiccata and smoking her pipe, another with ochre-smeared hair, a young one, with a baby on her shoulder, an elderly one-eyed man named Hamunde, my milkman. After them came the young chief Muzila, walking slowly, swinging the tails of his belt. This chief, notwithstanding his social rank, showed gross ignorance of botany ; but some of the others knew the name of almost every plant ; had I had a *ñanga*, a medicine-man, amongst them, I am sure I should have obtained

the names of all the specimens of the collection, for they are the great connoisseurs in this domain, their drugs being almost entirely obtained from the vegetable world.

A study of these names undoubtedly proves that Natives have the notion of the *genus*. This had been denied ; it seems that, when naming animals, Bantus distinguish correctly between species, but do not classify species into genera. In Botany it is not so. Under the same name they bring together forms which are sometimes widely different, but which belong to the same genus. Here are some of these names.

Tsuna means fern and applies to the Acrostichum tenuifolium, which climbs up the palm trees in the marsh, as well as to the few other kinds of Filicea found in the district of Lourenço Marques ; *gonhwa* is the name for Liliaceae, many kinds of which blossom in the spring : the Crinum Forbesii, with its big white and pink flower, and other kinds forming a bowl at the extremity of the stem ; there are five kinds of Commelina in my collection, which were called *Nkompfana*, both those with blue flowers, and the yellow ; a certain Papillionaceae genus, the Eriosema, is called *Rongole*. All the Strigae, a genus of the Scrophulariaceae family, are known under the name of *Shitshinyambita*, those which prevent the pot from boiling, as they are believed to have this effect when put into the fire. The Lobeliae are called *Shilawana*, etc.

The notion of the *genus* is so truly present that Thongas distinguish between various species in the same genus. So the tree called *Nkahlu*, an Apocynea, the Tabaernaemontana ventricosa, a valuable tree whose sap is used as a styptic, and whose roots are used to make a decoction for lung complaints, has a congener, found in the palm-tree marsh, the Voacanga Dregei, which is called *Nkahlutjobo*, nkahlu of the marsh. The two genera are very closely akin to each other.

Cognate species found in various regions are thus distinguished by the mention of their habitat, either the hill (ntlhaba), or the black earth (nyaka), or the forest (mutju). There is the *Muhlu wa ntlhaba*, of the hill, and *Muhlu-tjhobo*, of the marsh (Secamone sp. tree of the Asclepiadaceae family). This is even more striking

137 in the case of the Hibiscus genus. Its name is *Ntjhesi* ; there
824 are the Ntjhesi of the hill (Hibiscus surratensis, etc.), the Ntjhensi
757 of the nyaka, another species found in Morakwen in the black
815 earth ; and there is the *shitjhesinyana sha ntlhaba*, double diminutive of ntjhesi, the Sida cordifolia, a pretty little Malvacea, a near relative of the Hibiscus, very much used in treating children's complaints, a panacea for babies, as it cures their vomiting, headache, wounds and internal troubles!

137 I find the same correct connection established between two
824 Anonaceae shrubs, the Artabotrys brachypetala, called *Ntiti*, and
815 the Art. Monteiroae, called *Shintitane*, little Ntiti, of the same genus, but a shrub of a very different appearance.

However there is, of course, no anatomical study at the base of this classification : so their ideas of genus are not always, scientifically speaking, correct. They call any parasite *Phakama*, whatever may be its form, and have a superstitious fear of them, especially of the larger ones, growing on other trees, such as the nkanye and nkuhlu : "Phakama dja singita!" (1)

137 *Nkushe* means sea-weed, either the true algae, as Lagarosiphon muscoides, or other plants growing in water and belonging to totally different families, such as Urticularia stellaris, found in the same locality. *Nkaka*, or *Nkakana*, is the little Cucumber already described (p. 14), whilst *Nkaka wa tjhobo* is a Convolvulvus (Ipomea cairica). The *Shirimbyati*, one of the names most employed, designates first the Helichrysum parviflorum, a yellow Composita which covers the sandy dunes, and blossoms during the winter ; but *Shirimbyati sha tjhune*, the male one, is Gnaphalium stenophyllum, and *Shirimbyati sha mutju*, the one of the forest, an Indigofera belonging to the Leguminosae family ; these three plants have in common small hard leaves : hence the same name is given to them, although they are by no means related botanically speaking. So shirimbyati corresponds to our word heath, which is applied to many forms of evergreen undergrowth.

777 (1) "The parasite stem *singita*," i. e. is of bad omen. They do not say *yila*, is
824 taboo, though some rules apply to it similar to those concerning the tree struck by
753 lightning. One does not warm oneself at its fire ; its wood is not employed to cook food, for fear lest men should suffer from hydrocele.

The want of an enlightened botanical sense is further seen in the following fact : three different kinds of Vernonia, though belonging to the same genus, are called by different names, as if the Thongas had altogether failed to perceive their relation. The Vernonia cinerea is called *Ntshontshongori* ; the V. Perotteti, *Nkukulashibuya* (the plant with which one sweeps the threshing floor) ; the V. Tigna, *Hlunguhlungu*.

Another case of one and the same name applied to plants of different families having merely an external resemblance is the following : the *Ndjiba* is a Leguminosa tree of large proportions, Apalatoa delagoensis (Schinz), and the *Shindjibana*, viz., the little Ndjiba, is a small shrub with leaves somewhat similar to those of the Ndjiba. Its scientific name is Synaptolepis Oliveriana and it belongs to the Thymeleaceae family.

It is no wonder that the notion of genus, though existant, has not always been correctly and universally applied. Thongas have no idea of the anatomy of plants ; they have never dissected a flower, and are totally ignorant of the presence of male and female elements in it. They know, however, that these sexual differences exist. They have noticed, for instance, amongst the nkanye stems, which are of a dioecious species, that some are male and some female, and they carefully preserve some of the male stems in order to fecundate the female ones ; but they believe that this fecundation takes place through the roots of the trees!

Thus, when the name of a plant can be explained, we see that, in naming it, *its external characters, or its uses*, have alone been considered. For instance the beautiful yellow Sterculiacea, Melhania Forbesii, is called *Muhlwadambu*, Setting Sun, because its deep colour is similar to that of the sun when dipping below the horizon. A certain plant whose seeds explode when crushed is the *Buputwana*, because, "it says bu-bu-bu." A climbing Composita with juicy stem is the *Kamele*, "the one which is pressed," (kama) to squeeze out its juice, which is said to have a medicinal value. A Euphorbiacea whose fruit is eaten by the partridges (Fluggea obovata) is the *Midyañhwari*, partridges' food. Those named after their uses are, for instance, *Nkukulashibuya*, the one which sweeps the threshing floor (Vernonia Perotteti) ; *Nhlangulaba-*

137 *tjongwana*, the one employed to wipe little children when dirty!
815 (This plant is tomentous and answers well for the purpose);
824 *Psekamafura*, a large tree (Casearia Junodi, Schinz), a tree whose fuel is particularly good for melting mafureira fat (p. 18), etc. The Asparagus bearst he name of *Nkwangulatilo*, the same as that of the rainbow. When asked why this is so, Natives say that it is because the colour of the asparagus leaves resembles that of the rainbow, but another explanation which seems to me more probable is this : it is because this plant is given as a medicine to little children to prevent the roaring of thunder from "tearing out their diaphragm (handjula lipfalo)."

815 The great use of the vegetable world is to provide men with
824 food and medicine. If plants bear names and have been carefully studied by the Bantus this is, in the first place, because they are useful in these two respects. We have already considered Thonga vegetarian food (p. 9-19), and I shall devote some pages to the medical art in Chapter III.

In Appendix II, I give a list of Thonga botanical names with their scientific equivalents. These plants have been identified by Dr. Schinz, who published a flora of Delagoa Bay in the "Bulletin de l'Herbier Boissier," No. 10, 1900.

The conclusion reached from this study of Thonga names of plants is that the vegetable world has been the subject of a true and, in a certain sense, scientific observation on their part. Their botanical knowledge can be compared with that of our forefathers of two or three hundred years ago, before Botany became a true science, when plants were still named from their external characteristics, and studied as medicinal herbs ; I would even say that this knowledge, though of an inferior type, is more general amongst Thongas than, for instance, amongst the European peasantry ; a fact which shows that their powers of observation and scientific study are not inferior to those of other more advanced races.

Do plants play a part in Thonga religion? (1)

000 When travelling through the country, you may come across

(1) The Vendas plant the bulbs of an Amaryllida which they call Lohome near the stone which they use as an altar. See *S. A. Journal of Science*, Vol. XVII, p. 215.

754 still clapping their hands and singing. He approaches a hut,
695 enters, and triumphantly plants his assagay in one corner. A hole
787 is dug in that spot and — just where so and so places his wooden pillow when retiring to rest for the night — there are discovered a small gourd full of blood, packets of suspicious objects connected with enchantment, and perhaps a snake. It is quite possible that the diviner may have previously hidden these articles; nevertheless he carries them exultingly away; they are the wizards' weapons, the "bloods" (tingati) which they throw over their victims at night.

The shinusa returns to the village of the chief, who is very angry, and orders him to go and show these objects to their owner. Then the magician, making a sign to the crowd to stop singing, will go and throw the articles in front of the occupant of the hut to put him to shame before the whole assembly. The mysterious charms, and the noyi's gourd, must in every case be consumed by fire, and then the sickness and deaths in the village should cease.

e) *The Mondjo ordeal.*

754 As already pointed out, the final and supreme method of
695 unmasking baloyi is the *mondjo ordeal*. This is a legal procedure ordered by the chief, a true method of obtaining information in a criminal case. This custom calls to mind the judgment of God in the Middle Ages (ordeal is derived from "urtheil," judgment); it is practised by the majority of the Bantu tribes, varying from one tribe to another, but everywhere it has the same end in view, namely the discovery of the casters of spells by the imposition of an ordeal which is supposed to be fatal to such as are guilty.

This ordeal is called amongst the Ba-Ronga (as also from one end of the Thonga tribe to the other) *drinking the mondjo* (ku nwa
● [137] mondjo). The mondjo is a plant of the Solaneae family, probably a Datura, which possesses intoxicating properties. With it a special magician prepares a beverage which is to act as a means of revelation. It can be resorted to by any individual accused of witchcraft, or of any other crime. A woman accused of adultery,

Amongst the first we have already noticed *falling stars* (p. 309) ; 787
the snail (p. 338) : should you meet with it on the road, you will soon hear that one of your relatives has died ; *the stem of cuscuta* (yendje-yendje) ; (1) there are families, however, for which this is not of bad omen, but for other people it foretells misfortune ; *the mbonga bee* belongs to the same class (p. 337) ; the various kinds of *mistletoe* are also of bad omen. So also is the *puff-adder* (p. 340), the *likure* (p. 340), a greyish slender snake : if it blows upon you, or bites you, you will grow thin and turn grey, like the animal itself ; the long-legged bird *shitshinyariendjo* foretells misfortune on the road (I. p. 339) as do also the *buwumati* snake and the *nkangu bird*.

Other objects are of good omen ; the beetle *Eccopteptera* and the *Mutilla* (p. 336), and especially the beetle *Bombolosi*, belonging to the Curculionidae family, a curious insect which drops to the ground and counterfeits death when touched or frightened ; it is the symbol of riches. Natives hang it on a string at their door ; I have heard of others hanging it in their hair ; but in this case it is said to be placed there to eat lice!

All these superstitions are believed in more or less seriously. But, in order to know their fate and what they must do to avoid misfortune, Thongas have recourse to true methods of divination. Amongst these mantic practices some are simple and some more elaborate.

II. *Less important Means of Divination.*

1) Amongst these I may mention first the *pshapsha*, which 524
corresponds to our "drawing lots" and is performed exactly 787
in the same way by placing pieces of grass or sticks of different length between the fingers, and pulling out one of them, having

(1) The cuscuta sometimes covers large patches of ground on the sandy hills of 137
Thongaland ; as is well-known, it has a regular root, but afterwards becomes a parasite 824
on the vegetables to which it attaches itself, whilst its stem and root die. This fact 787
has been noticed by the Natives, and has given the cuscuta a special value in their eyes. When they happen to find a plant which still retains its stem and root, magicians make use of these, especially in their exorcism rites. But this stem, which is so rare, is a bad omen for ordinary people.

APPENDIX II (See p. 332).

List of Thonga botanic names with their scientific equivalents.

According to the publication of Hans Schinz and Henri-A. Junod:
"Zur Kenntnis der Pflanzenwelt der Delago-Bay."
"Bulletin de l'Herbier Boissier," Tome VII. N° II, 1899.

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Pteridophyta.	Tsuna.	Acrostichum tenuifolium (and other fer
Typhaceae.	Papala.	Typha australis (Used to make mats).
Pandanaceae.	Shihlowa.	Pandanus.
Aponogetonaceae.	Fenyana.	Aponogeton spathaceus (1).
Hydrocharitaceae.	Nkushe.	Lagarosiphon muscoides (2).
Gramina.	Luhlwa.	Imperata cylindrica (Used as thatch).
»	Byanyi.	Andropogon (and all the other grasses).
»	Litlange. Ntlangi.	Cynodon dactylon.
Cyperaceae.	Nhlale.	Cyperus flabelliformis.
»	Bungu.	Cyperus prolifer (?) (Papyrus).
Commelinaceae.	Nkompfana.	Commelina africana, Forskalei, etc.
Liliaceae.	Goñhwa.	Crinum Forbesii, etc.
Orchidaceae.	Shishengane.	Eulophia papillosa.
Olacaceae.	Psautemu.	Opilia tomentella (3).
Amarantaceae.	Shinghalafumane.	Hermbstaedtia elegans.
»	Tlabatlabane.	Cyphocarpa Zeyheri (4).
Nymphaeaceae.	Tibu.	Nymphaea coerulea (Bulb edible).
Menispermaceae.	Shimbyati.	Cissampelos Pareira (5).
»	Shihumbula.	Synclisia Junodi.
Anonaceae.	Ntiti.	Artabotrys brachypetala.
»	Shintitana.	Artabotrys Monteirosae.
Leguminosae.	Gowana.	Albizzia fastigiata.
»	Khawa.	Acacia kraussiana.
»	Ndjiba.	Apalatoa delagoensis.
»	Ntjunge.	Dichrostachys nutans.
»	Nembe-nembe.	Cassia petersiana.
»	Hlapfuta (Ro).	Afzelia Cuanzensis. (6)
»	Shene (Dj).	» »
»	Shirimbyati sha mutju.	Indigofera podophylla.
»	Shirimpeti sha tchune.	Indigofera sp?
»	Lisekaseka.	Sesbania aculeata.
»	Shekane.	Desmodium incanum.
»	Nwamahlanga.	Canavalia obtusifolia,
»	Rongolo ra nhlobe.	Ericsema cajanoides (The white Rongolo)
Meliaceae.	Nyamari.	Ekebergia Meyeri.
Euphorbiaceae.	Midyanhwari.	Flueggea obovata.
»	Shinyandjana.	Phyllantus pentandrus.
Anacardiaceae.	Nkanye.	Sclerocarya caffra (King of trees!) (p. 17)
Hippocrateaceae.	Shikokombela.	Hippocrates sp.
»	Mphyinsha.	Salacia Kraussii (Fruit edible).
Sapindaceae.	Buputwane.	Cardiospermum halicacabum.
Malvaceae.	Ntjinsi.	Hibiscus surattensis, Trionum, etc.
»	Shintjincsana.	Sida cordifolia.
»	Bushale.	Gossypium herbaceum (Cotton).

Sterculiaceae.	Muhlwadambu.	Melhania Forbesii.
»	Nkondlwahari.	Waltheria americana.
Ochnaceae.	Kelekele.	Ochna arborea.
Flacourtiaceae.	Psekamafura.	Casearia Junodii (Schinz).
»	Nhlungunu.	Flacourtia Ramontoli.
Passifloraceae.	Menyamamba.	Modecca Kirkii.
Thymelaeaceae.	Shindjibane.	Synaptolepis Oliveriana.
Combretaceae.	Balekanhloko.	Combretum Gueinzii.
»	Nkonono.	Terminalia sericea (Used for handles, etc.).
Ebenaceae.	Nhlangulane.	Euclea natalensis.
»	Shirole.	Royena pentandra.
Sapotaceae.	Ndjole.	Mimusops caffra (Fruit edible).
Loganiaceae.	Nsala.	Strychnos spinosa (p. 16).
»	Nkwakwa.	Strychnos Ungasha (p. 17).
Apocynaceae.	Nulu.	Carissa Arduina.
»	Ntamunga.	Carissa sp. (Fruit edible).
»	Mbungu.	Landolphia Kirkii (7)
»	Nkahlu.	Tabaernaemontana ventricosa (Styptic).
»	Nkahlu-tjhobo.	Vocanga Dregei.
»	Ntjulu.	Strophanthus Peterianus (p. 58).
Asclepiadaceae.	Muhlu-tjhobo.	Secamone sp.
»	Ndjutlwane.	Sarcostoma viminale.
Convolvulaceae.	Nkaka-wa-tjhobo.	Ipomoea cairica.
»	Masinga.	Stictocardia Woodii.
Scrophulariaceae.	Shitsinyambita.	Striga orobanchoïdes.
»	Murilwane (Dj).	Striga lutea.
Solanaceae.	Rulane.	Solanum panduraeforme.
»	Mondjo.	Datura fastuosa (?) (8).
Bignoniaceae.	Mpfungura.	Kigelia aethiopica.
Pedaliaceae.	Hlehlwa.	Preirea Forbesii.
Lentibulariaceae.	Nkushe.	Utricularia stellaris.
Rubiaceae.	Ngalangala.	Tricalysia Kraussiana.
Cucurbitaceae.	Nkaka.	Momordica Balsamina (Edible).
»	Shirakarana.	Citrullus Naudinianus.
»	Nkaka wa Batshopi.	Coccinia jatrophaefolia (Eaten by Chopis).
Campanulaceae.	Shihlangwana.	Wahlenbergia arenaria.
»	Shilawana.	Lobelia chilawana (Schinz).
Compositae.	Ntshontshongori.	Vernonia Cinerea.
»	Nkukula-shibuya.	» Perotteti.
»	Hlanguhlungu.	» tigna.
»	Shifodyana.	Ageratum conyzoides.
»	Kamele.	Mikania scandens (Medicinal).
»	Shirimbyati sha tchune.	Gnaphalium stenophyllum.
»	Shirimbyati.	Helichrysum parviflorum.
»	Mushidji.	Bidens africana.
»	Nhlangula-batjongwana.	Helichrysum damarense.

This list might be greatly extended by any one devoting more time to the study of Thonga botany. Though it is not complete, I publish it, knowing by experience how difficult accurate botanic classification is in South African flora. It may be used as a starting point.

(1) Dancers make crowns of it. (2) All the algae and generally plants growing in water are called Nkushe. (3) Banyans are said to use it to clean their teeth. (4) Used for rheumatism. (5) Medicine for bowel complaints. (6) Used to manufacture canoes. (7) Indiarubber, Kafir orange, p. 19. (8) This plant, used as a means of divination, is a Datura, subspontaneous or cultivated in various spots. I cannot guarantee the name of the species (p. 530).